SHAKESPEARE'S

# ROMEO AND JULIET

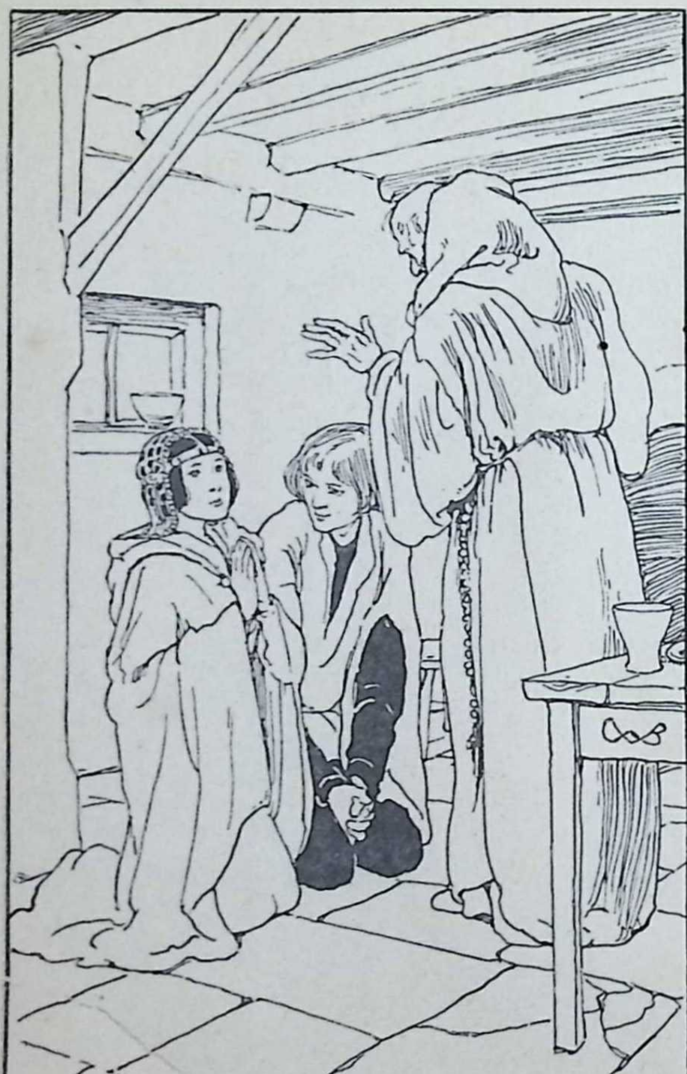
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THERE FRIAR LAURENCE MARRIED THEM

[See page 27

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# ROMEO AND JULIET

## AT CAPULET'S FEAST

### A Masked Stranger is Seen

In the fair city of Verona, in the land of Italy, there once lived a great nobleman, Lord Capulet, with his wife and his only child, a daughter, Juliet.

Juliet was sweeter than the spring blossom in the orchard, and fairer to look upon than the fairest flower of the summer garden. She was the most beautiful maiden in all Verona.

In the hall of his mansion, Lord Capulet had given many a feast, but no feast was as grand as that which was to be held on the night when Juliet, for the first time in her life, was to take part in the dance.

It was expected that one of the guests, Count Paris, would become her husband. Count Paris was a kinsman of the ruling Prince. He had already asked Lord Capulet for the hand of Juliet in marriage.

"She is young and knows but little of the world," was Capulet's reply. "Let yet two summers pass away, before we think of making her a bride."

"Younger than she are already happily married," said Paris.

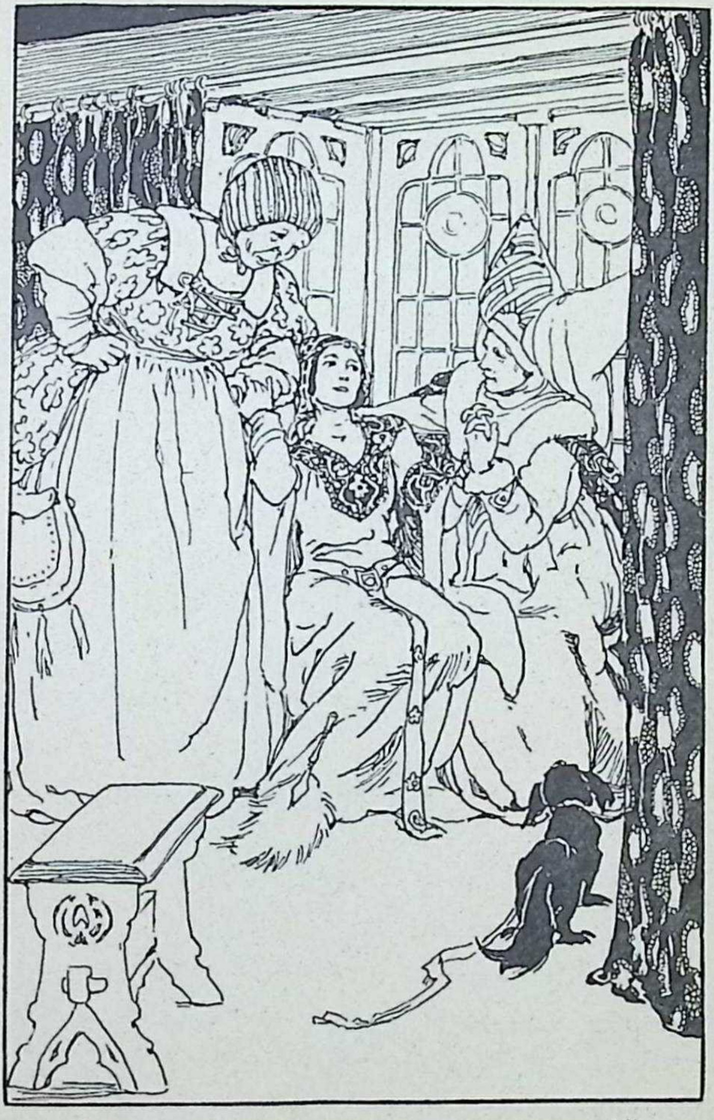
Capulet was pleased that a gentleman of such noble birth should wish to marry his daughter. So he said:

"When you come to our feast as a very welcome guest, you will see many of the most beautiful ladies of Verona. Look upon them all; speak to them all. You may find one whom you will like better than my daughter. But if then, gentle Paris, you still wish to marry her, you shall have my consent."

Before the guests arrived, Lady Capulet spoke to her daughter, and said:

"Tell me, Juliet, have you ever thought of being married?"

"It is an honour that I do not dream of," answered Juliet.



"HAVE YOU EVER THOUGHT OF BEING MARRIED?"

"Well, think of marriage now," said Lady Capulet. Then she went on:

"The valiant Paris seeks you for his love.
Verona's summer hath not such a flower.
What say you? Can you love the gentleman?
This night you shall behold him at our feast:
Read o'er the volume of young Paris' face
And find delight writ there with beauty's pen."

And Juliet answered dutifully:

"I'll look upon him to like him, if looking will lead to liking."

Meanwhile there was bustle and commotion among the cooks and the butlers and the footmen and the maids and the hired serving-men and the musicians, all making ready for the great company that Capulet had invited.

When the guests arrived, many of them, as was the custom, were wearing masks; and they were attended by pages bearing torches.

Capulet beamed with pride and happiness as he moved among his guests,

exchanging a word here, and making a merry jest there, and giving a warm greeting to all.

"Welcome, gentlemen!" he cried. "Ladies that have their toes unplagued with corns, will dance with you. Ah, ha, my mistresses! Which of you will now refuse to dance? Welcome, gentlemen! I have seen the day when I have worn a mask and could whisper a tale of love into a fair lady's ear. 'Tis gone, 'tis gone! Come musicians, play! Make room, and foot it, girls!"

The musicians played; and fair ladies and gallant gentlemen stepped gaily to the measure of the dance. The richness of the dresses, the glitter of the jewels, the scarlet and gold of the footmen, and the light of the torches and the lamps formed a scene of rare splendour, every movement of the dancers giving a fresh picture of colour and of delight.

Juliet was a vision of radiant loveliness. She wore a simple gown of white silk, and

a girdle of silver. She had a string of pearls about her neck, and jewelled ornaments in her hair.

Many a youth sought the honour of dancing with her. She danced with Count Paris, who was more than ever in love with her; but she showed no more favour to him than to any other, and it was clear that he had not found his way to her heart.

In a corner of the hall, there stood a masked stranger, a young gentleman, tall and noble-looking. His eyes followed Juliet as she danced, and he said to one of the hired serving-men:

"What lady is that who enriches the hand of yonder knight?"

"I know not, sir," answered the serving-man.

The stranger tried to find words to describe Juliet's wondrous beauty. First he said that she shone brighter than the light of the torches. Then he declared that she seemed like a glittering jewel in the ear

of a dark-skinned African; and then he compared her to a snow-white dove in a company of crows.

Thus it was he spoke:

"O, she doth teach the torches to burn bright!
It seems she hangs upon the cheek of night
Like a rich jewel in an Ethiope's ear;
Beauty too rich for use, for earth too dear!
So shows a snowy dove trooping with crows
As yonder lady o'er her fellows shows."

These words were overheard by a cousin of Juliet, named Tybalt, a fiery and a hot-blooded youth. A dark and threatening look came into Tybalt's face, and he said to his page:

"Fetch me my sword, boy! This, by his voice, is a Montague! By the honour of my kin, I hold it not a sin to strike him dead!"

## A CLASH OF SWORDS

### And Dark and Angry Threats

The stranger was Romeo, the only son of Lord Montague, another nobleman of Verona.

Lord Montague and Lord Capulet had quarrelled, and they were enemies. Each was the head of a great and powerful family, and their hatred of each other was shared by their kinsmen, and even by the servants of each household down to the meanest scullion.

Fighting between the rival parties had disturbed the peace of Verona, and only that very morning a fierce fight had arisen out of the chance meeting of two of the servants of Montague with two of the servants of Capulet.

First there had been frowns and then taunts. Angry words followed, and then there was a clash of swords.

A kinsman of Romeo, named Benvolio, happened to be passing.

"Draw apart, fools, put away your swords!" he cried; and, with his own blade, he beat down the weapons of the servants.

At that moment, Tybalt appeared. He drew his sword, and turned on Benvolio.

"What, you with your sword drawn in a quarrel with these low fellows!" he cried. "Turn to a foe of your own rank, and meet your death!"

"I am only trying to keep peace," said Benvolio. "Put away your sword, or use it to help me to part these fellows."

"What," cried Tybalt, "with your sword in your hand, you talk of peace! I hate the word as I hate hell, all Montagues, and you! Coward!"

He made a fierce lunge. But Benvolio, although he disliked fighting, lacked nothing in swordsmanship and in courage, and he deftly turned the stroke aside. Thrusts and blows were then exchanged. The clamour drew many men from the houses of both the Montagues and the

Capulets, and they all joined in the fray.

Several of the citizens came running into the streets, and with them they brought their clubs and pikes. They had no patience with the men who thus disturbed the peace of the city.

"Beat them down! Down with the Capulets! Down with the Montagues!" they cried, as they struck down the swords of the rival factions.

Then there came hurrying along, Lord Montague and Lord Capulet themselves, followed by their wives.

"Give me my long sword!" cried Capulet. "My sword, I say! Old Montague is come, and flourishes his sword in my face."

"A crutch is what you need!" cried Lady Capulet, holding him back. "Why do you call for a sword?"

And Lady Montague was also holding back her husband, who was shaking his weapon at Capulet, and calling him, "Villain!"

News of what was happening was carried to the royal palace, not far away. The Prince, with captains and troopers attending him, hurried to the spot, and, when he arrived, the fighting ceased.

"These brawls," cried the Prince, "caused by the quarrels of you, old Capulet and Montague, must end. If ever you disturb the peace of our streets again, you shall pay for it with your lives."

Those, who had been hurt, had their wounds attended to, and the rest departed; but anger blazed in many eyes, and in none more than in the eyes of Tybalt.

In the evening, therefore, when he discovered that the son of the hated Montague had come uninvited to Capulet's feast, Tybalt's anger broke out anew. And the gay and festive scene would have been marred by fighting and bloodshed, if Capulet himself had not been near at hand.

Capulet wanted no disturbance on that joyful occasion. He led Tybalt into a quiet corner, and said:

"Why, how now kinsman! Why do you storm so?"

"Uncle, this is a Montague, who has only come here to mock at us," said Tybalt, pointing to Romeo. "It is that villain Romeo. I'll not endure him!"

"Be patient, let him alone," said Capulet. "He bears himself like a gentleman, and, to say truth, all Verona speaks well of him. I would not, for the wealth of all the town, have him insulted here in my house. Take no notice of him, and put off these frowns. They are ill-fitted for a feast."

"Why, uncle, 'tis a shame!" exclaimed Tybalt.

"Be quiet!" cried Capulet sternly; and there was nothing for Tybalt but to obey.

Tybalt left the hall, and, as he went, he muttered dark and angry threats.

## ROMEO SPEAKS WITH JULIET

### And a Wondrous Love is Born

Capulet was right when he said that all Verona spoke well of Romeo, for Romeo was gentle in his nature and charming in his manners.

It was strange that he should have come unasked to Capulet's feast. It happened in this way.

Romeo was in love with Rosaline, a beautiful lady of Verona. But she had vowed that she would never marry, and Romeo was sad at heart. Benvolio tried to cheer him, and said:

"Come to the feast of Capulet. There you will meet the fair Rosaline, together with all the admired beauties of Verona, and you will see ladies far more beautiful than she."

"I'll go along," said Romeo, "not to look upon the others, but to rejoice in the sight of my own love, for none could be fairer than Rosaline."

So Romeo and Benvolio went together, and they were joined by a number of friends. They did not expect that anybody would find out who they were, for they all wore masks. With them were their torch-bearers. One of the party was Mercutio, a kinsman of the Prince. Mercutio was a joyous companion, and a gallant and a light-hearted young gentleman.

As they made their way to Capulet's mansion, Romeo had some dark fears, a dread of some evil that would grow out of this adventure.

His friends tried with jest and laughter to drive away his gloom.

"I am in no mood for dancing," said Romeo, "I will bear a torch."

"Nay, gentle Romeo," said Mercutio, "we must see you dance."

Romeo spoke sadly of a dream that he had dreamed. Mercutio laughingly said that he could see that Queen Mab, the fairy that brings dreams, had been with Romeo; and Mercutio then amused his

friends with some pretty fancies about Queen Mab.

And this is what he said:

### Queen Mab

She comes
In shape no bigger than an agate-stone
On the fore-finger of an alderman,
Drawn with a team of little atomies
Athwart men's noses as they lie asleep;
Her waggon-spokes made of long spinners' legs;
The cover, of the wings of grasshoppers;
The traces, of the smallest spider's web;
The collars, of the moonshine's watery beams;
Her whip, of cricket's bone; the lash, of film;
Her waggoner, a small grey-coated gnat;

. . . . .

Her chariot is an empty hazel-nut
Made by the joiner squirrel, or old grub,
Time out o' mind the fairies' coach-makers.
And in this state she gallops night by night
Through lovers' brains, and then they dream of love:
O'er courtiers' knees, that dream on court'sies straight:
O'er lawyers' fingers, who straight dream on fees:
O'er ladies' lips, who straight on kisses dream.

At length Romeo and his friends were admitted to Capulet's mansion, and they joined the gay throng. Romeo stood alone while the others danced, and when he looked upon Juliet's radiant beauty, all his love of Rosaline vanished. He waited for a chance to speak to Juliet, and the chance came soon after Tybalt had left the hall. Romeo took the hand of Juliet in his, and said:

"If I do wrong to touch your hand, I'll make amends. My lips are ready to smooth that rough touch with a gentle kiss."

Juliet smiled; and for some moments they held sweet speech together, and in those moments there was born in the heart of each, a great and a wondrous love for the other.

Near them stood an old dame who had nursed Juliet as a baby, and had attended her ever since.

"Madam, your mother wishes to speak to you," she said to Juliet.



"IF I DO WRONG TO TOUCH YOUR HAND"

"Who is her mother?" Romeo asked, when Juliet had gone.

"Her mother is the lady of the house," answered the nurse.

When Romeo heard that Juliet was the daughter of Capulet, he exclaimed:

"I fear I shall never be so happy again as I have been this night."

After the feast, as the guests were departing, Juliet called her nurse and, pointing to Romeo, said:

"Who is he, there, that would not dance?"

"His name is Romeo," was the answer. "He is the son of your great enemy, Montague."

"O, to think that the only one that I shall ever love," cried Juliet, "is the one whom I ought to hate."

## BY MOONLIGHT

### In the Orchard

Romeo longed to see Juliet again, but it would have been useless for him, a Montague, to go to the house of Capulet, to ask for the hand of Juliet in marriage. He could only see her secretly.

It was past the hour of midnight when, together with Benvolio and Mercutio, he left the mansion, and, as they entered a lane at the side of Capulet's orchard, Romeo, without a word, suddenly disappeared into the night.

"Romeo! my cousin Romeo!" called Benvolio.

"Romeo! madman! lover! Appear in the likeness of a sigh," cried Mercutio, jestingly. "Cry but 'Ay! me!' pronounce but 'love' and 'dove.' In the name of Rosaline's bright eyes, I call on you to answer."

But there was no answer.

"Come," said Benvolio to Mercutio, "it is vain to seek him if he means not to be found."

Romeo had climbed the orchard wall and had hidden himself among the trees. He did not stir until the sounds of his friends' footfalls had died away.

All was quiet and peaceful. The night was clear; and bright were the stars; and the crescent moon hung low above the orchard, and tipped the trees with silver.

Romeo crept towards Capulet's mansion and he saw a light in one of the rooms. It was the room where Juliet slept. In front of it was a balcony, overhung with roses which gave perfume to the soft breezes of the Italian night.

But there was no sleep for Juliet that night. The love, that had stirred her heart, kept her awake. She stepped on to the balcony, and leaned her cheek upon her hand. Then she sighed.

"It is my lady, O, it is my love!" murmured Romeo.

And Juliet, never dreaming that anyone was at hand to hear, told her love thoughts to the stars: and Romeo's heart beat fast, for he heard his name upon her lips.

Juliet was saying that it was only the name of Romeo that was her enemy, and not Romeo himself; and that there was nothing in a name. He could give up his name; or, she would give up the name of Capulet, if Romeo would but swear to be her love. And thus it was she spoke:

"O, Romeo, Romeo! wherefore art thou Romeo?
Deny thy father, and refuse thy name:
Or, if thou wilt not, be but sworn my love,
And I'll no longer be a Capulet.
'Tis but thy name, that is my enemy.
What's Montague? it is nor hand, nor foot,
Nor arm, nor face, nor any other part
Belonging to a man. O! be some other name.
What's in a name? that which we call a rose,
By any other name would smell as sweet."

Then after a few moments, she exclaimed:

"Romeo, give up your name, and for that name take me!"

"I'll take you at your word," cried Romeo, running forward. "Only call me love, and, henceforth, I never will be Romeo."

Juliet's breathing came quickly.

"What man are you," she cried, "that, under cover of night, breaks in upon my thoughts?"

"By name I know not how to tell you who I am," said Romeo, "because it is an enemy to you."

Then Juliet knew that it was Romeo who stood before her.

"How came you here, tell me, and why?" she cried. "The orchard walls are high and hard to climb, and the place means death to you, if any of my kinsmen find you here."

"With love's light wings did I o'er-perch these walls," said Romeo. "Your kinsmen could never keep me out."

And Juliet said:

"I blush for that which you have heard me speak to-night. O, how I wish I could take back those words. But if you think

I am too quickly won, I'll be coy and wayward, and frown on you, and declare I do not love you. But I will not pretend. Tell me truly, O gentle Romeo, do you love me?"

"I swear by yonder moon——" began Romeo.

"O, swear not by the moon, that ever changes!" said Juliet. "Do not swear at all."

Hopes and doubts and fears in turn filled Juliet's heart.

"Our love is too sudden and too rash," she went on. "It is too much like the lightning, which ceases ere one can say, 'It lightens!' Sweet love, good night! Let us wait until the bud of love is ripened by the breath of summer, and it may prove a beauteous flower when next we meet."

"O, will you not promise to marry me?" pleaded Romeo.

His words overcame her doubts and her fears.

"Dear Romeo," she said, "if you wish to marry me, let me have word to-morrow

by a messenger that I shall send to you, and tell me when and where we are to be married; and I'll follow you throughout the world. A thousand times, good night."

And she went to her room.

Romeo turned to go, but he had not taken many steps before he heard:

"Hist, Romeo, hist!"

"It is my love that calls," murmured Romeo as he hurried back. "How silver-sweet sound lovers' tongues by night!"

Juliet was again upon the balcony.

"At what o'clock to-morrow," she asked, "shall I send to you?"

"At the hour of nine," answered Romeo.

"I have forgotten why I did call you back," said Juliet, trying to think of something else to say, only to keep him there a little longer.

"Let me stand here till you remember it," said Romeo.

"And I shall keep on forgetting, only to have you there," said Juliet. "Good night, good night! Parting is such sweet



"O, WILL YOU NOT PROMISE TO MARRY ME?"

C

sorrow, that I shall say 'good night' till it be morrow."

And as Romeo climbed over the wall into the lane, he looked up at the lighted window, and whispered:

"May sleep rest upon your eyes, and peace dwell in your heart!"

At daybreak Romeo made his way to the cell where dwelt a friar named Laurence.

Friar Laurence loved Romeo, and he had often given him counsel. When Romeo arrived, the holy man was already at work. He had just come home after collecting herbs, from which he skilfully made medicines, the remedies for many ills.

Romeo told him of his love for Juliet and begged the friar to marry them secretly that day.

To this, the friar agreed. He felt that only good could come of the marriage, for he thought that, when the fitting time arrived to make the marriage known, the quarrels of the Montagues and Capulets would end, and hate would turn to love.

During the morning Juliet's nurse came to see Romeo. Juliet could trust no other as her messenger.

"Nurse," said Romeo, "give my greetings to the lady, your mistress, and tell her to come this afternoon to Friar Laurence's cell. There we shall be married. Later on, wait behind the abbey wall, and there my servant will give you a rope ladder to be fixed so as to enable me to climb to the balcony under cover of night, when next I go to see my beloved."

When Juliet received the message, she wasted no time. With her heart beating fast, she made her way to Friar Laurence's cell. There she found her beloved Romeo waiting for her, and there Friar Laurence married them.

What a trick the fates had played! Montague and Capulet were kept apart by hatred, but the only son of the one, and the only daughter of the other, were joined together by love.

## GALLANT MERCUTIO

### AND THE FIERY TYBALT

LATER in the afternoon, Mercutio and Benvolio were waiting for Romeo in a public square.

"I pray you, good Mercutio, let us leave this place," said the peace-loving Benvolio. "The day is hot, and the Capulets are about. There will be trouble if we meet them."

But Mercutio was in no mood to have his movements governed by the Capulets, and so they both remained where they were.

Tybalt, with some of his friends, came that way.

"Gentlemen, a word with one of you," said Tybalt. "Mercutio, you consort with Romeo——"

Tybalt was using a word which, in those days, meant to play music, as well as to be friendly.

"Consort!" repeated Mercutio. "If you are going to make minstrels of us, here's my fiddle-stick; here's something that will make you dance."

And he sharply tapped the hilt of his sword, to make it clear to Tybalt, that, as a kinsman of the Prince, Mercutio would choose his friends as he pleased, and that he would allow no man to meddle in his private affairs.

"We talk here in a public place," said Benvolio. "Go to a private spot, and talk quietly of your grievances, or else depart. Here all men gaze on us."

"Men's eyes were made to look," said Mercutio, "and let them gaze; I will not budge to please any man."

Just then Romeo approached. He was walking with a light and joyous step.

This was the man that Tybalt wanted.

"Romeo," he exclaimed, "the hate I bear you can give you no better name than this—you are a villain!"

Romeo's face darkened, and his fingers itched to grasp his sword. But he remembered that he had just married Juliet, Tybalt's cousin, and he would not draw his blade against her kinsman, now also a kinsman of his own. So he said quietly:

"Tybalt, the reason I have for loving you, forbids me to give the proper answer to such a greeting. I see you do not know me. I am no villain. Therefore, farewell."

"Boy," said Tybalt with a sneer, "this shall not excuse the wrongs you have done me; therefore turn and draw your sword."

"I have never wronged you," said Romeo, "but I love you better than you can guess, until you know the reason. And so, good Capulet—a name I hold as dearly as my own—be satisfied."

Mercutio could not understand. He was amazed at Romeo's words.

"O calm, vile surrender," cried Mercutio.

He took up the challenge himself. He mocked at the name of Tybalt, which sounded something like "Tybert," the

name given to the king of cats in an old story.

"Tybalt, you rat-catcher!" cried Mercutio, as he drew his sword.

"What do you want with me?" said Tybalt.

"Good king of cats, nothing but one of your nine lives," said Mercutio.

"Come on, then!" cried Tybalt, as he drew his blade.

"Good Mercutio," said Romeo, "put away your weapon."

But nothing could prevent the fight that followed.

"Draw, Benvolio," cried Romeo, as he drew his own sword, "beat down their weapons! Gentlemen, for shame, stop this outrage!"

Romeo tried to part the swordsmen, and, for a moment, Mercutio was off his guard. In a flash, Tybalt crouched below Romeo's arm, and stabbed Mercutio.

Mercutio staggered, and Tybalt fled with his friends.

"I am hurt," cried Mercutio. "A plague on both your houses. Is he gone free without hurt?"

"Courage, man," said Romeo, "the hurt cannot be much."

"No, 'tis not so deep as a well, nor so wide as a church door, but 'tis enough. Ask for me to-morrow, and you will find me ready for the grave. A plague on both your houses. Why the devil did you come between us? Help me into some house, Benvolio, or I shall faint."

Benvolio led Mercutio into a doorway; and there came the end. There Mercutio passed away, Mercutio, a joyous companion, a gallant gentleman, and a faithful friend.

"O, Romeo, Romeo," cried Benvolio, "brave Mercutio's dead!"

Tybalt came back. He was not satisfied. It was Romeo that he had been seeking. But he found a Romeo different from the Romeo he had left. He found a Romeo whose blood was on fire.



THE MEN FLEW FIERCELY AT EACH OTHER

"Tybalt!" cried Romeo, "just now you called me 'villain.' That name I now give you. Take it back! Mercutio's soul is not far away, and is waiting for yours to keep him company. Either you, or I, or both, must go with him!"

And the men flew fiercely at each other. Their swords flashed, and clashed and hissed.

Two of the bravest hearts, two of the finest swordsmen in Verona, were fighting to the death.

But Tybalt had met his master. His defence wavered for an instant, and like lightning, Romeo broke through his guard.

And it was over. The fiery Tybalt had fought his last fight.

## ROMEO IS BANISHED

### And Juliet Sends a Ring

"Romeo, away, be gone!" cried Benvolio. "The citizens are roused, and if you are taken, the Prince will doom you to death."

Romeo was dazed. He felt that he had no will of his own, and he muttered:

"O, I am fortune's plaything!"

And, as the citizens, all armed, came running out of their houses, Romeo fled, and sought shelter in the cell of Friar Laurence.

The news of the death of Mercutio and Tybalt spread like wildfire. When the Prince heard what had happened, he said:

"I will be deaf to excuses and tears and prayers. Enough blood has been shed through these brawls, and now, my own kinsman is slain. Romeo is banished. Let him leave our realm quickly, else, when he's found, he shall die."

There was mourning at the palace for the death of Mercutio, the Prince's kinsman; and there was weeping among the Capulets for the death of Tybalt.

Juliet first heard the news when the nurse brought in the rope-ladder. The nurse flung it down, and wringing her hands, she cried:

"Oh, Tybalt, Tybalt, the best friend that I had! Tybalt is gone, and Romeo, that killed Tybalt, is banished."

"O God!" cried Juliet, "did Romeo's hand shed Tybalt's blood?"

"It did, alas the day, it did!" cried the nurse.

Beside herself with grief, Juliet, for one brief moment, cried out against Romeo. She declared that though he was handsome, he was full of deceit, that he was a fiend and a tyrant, and that he had the heart of a serpent.

"Shame come to Romeo!" said the nurse.

But Juliet turned on her with flashing eyes, and cried:

"Blistered be your tongue for such a wish! He was not born to shame: upon his brow, shame is ashamed to sit. O, what a beast was I to chide at him! What tongue shall smooth his name, when I, his wife, have mangled it? Tybalt would have slain my husband. Tybalt is dead! This is comfort. I weep for something more grievous than the death of Tybalt. Romeo — banished! That 'banished,' that one word 'banished' is worse to me than the death of ten thousand Tybalts."

Juliet's love for Romeo had conquered every other feeling in her heart.

"Go to your chamber," said the nurse. "I have been told that Romeo is hiding in Friar Laurence's cell. I'll go and find him, and he will comfort you. Your Romeo will be here to-night."

"O find him! Give this ring to my true knight," said Juliet, "and bid him come to take his last farewell."

And she took a ring from her finger,

and sent it to Romeo as a token of her unfaltering love.

Meanwhile Romeo was in the cell of Friar Laurence, and he was full of grief for having slain Juliet's cousin. The holy man left him in order to find out what was the Prince's judgment, and, when he returned, he said:

"My dear son, be thankful! your life is spared. Your fate is banishment."

"Banishment!" cried Romeo. "Be merciful; say 'death'"

"Be patient," said the friar, "for the world is broad and wide."

"There is no world outside Verona walls," cried Romeo. "Banishment is not mercy, it is torture. Heaven is here, where Juliet lives, and every cat and dog may live here in heaven, and may look on her, but Romeo may not."

"You foolish man, hear me but speak a word," said the friar.

But Romeo would not listen. He threw himself upon the ground in despair.

There came a knocking at the great oak door of the cell.

"Arise, good Romeo, hide yourself," said Friar Laurence.

The knocking became louder and louder.

"Romeo, arise! you will be taken! Run to my study," said the friar.

But Romeo stirred not. He cared not what happened to him now.

"Who knocks?" cried the friar, as he went to the door. "Where do you come from, and what do you want?"

"Let me come in and you shall know my errand," cried a woman's voice outside. "I come from Lady Juliet."

It was Juliet's nurse. The friar opened the door and she entered. When she saw Romeo upon the ground, she said:

"Juliet is in the same state as he. She lies weeping and sobbing, and sobbing and weeping."

Then she turned to Romeo, and said:

"Stand up if you be a man. For Juliet's sake, stand up."

Romeo roused himself.

"Did you speak of Juliet?" he asked. "How is she? What does she say? What does she think of me for killing her cousin?"

"O, she says nothing, sir," said the nurse, "but she weeps and weeps, and then starts up and calls Tybalt; and then cries 'Romeo,' and then falls down again."

"As if that name were shot from a gun and did murder her," cried Romeo. "O, tell me, friar, in what part of my body my name lodges, so that I may thrust my blade into it."

Romeo drew his sword, and the friar caught him by the wrist.

"You are behaving like a madman!" said the friar sternly. "You have slain Tybalt! Will you slay yourself, and slay your lady too? Rouse yourself, man! You should be happy. Your Juliet is alive. You have slain the man that would have slain you. The law that might have doomed you to death, becomes your friend,



"ROUSE YOURSELF, MAN!"

and has turned death into exile. All these things are blessings."

And then the friar went on:

"Go to your love and comfort her. Then set out for Mantua, and live there till we find a time to make your marriage known, and to beg the Prince to pardon you. Then we shall call you back with twenty hundred thousand times more joy than you went forth in sorrow."

"And here, sir, is a ring Juliet bade me give you," said the nurse as she departed.

Romeo was much comforted by Juliet's love token.

"At daybreak," said the friar, "you must leave the city in disguise. I shall see your servant, and he will visit Mantua from time to time, and let you have the news. Give me your hand. Farewell!"

# THE SONG OF THE LARK

## And a Last Farewell

That night, while the city slept, Romeo made his way to Capulet's mansion, to bid farewell to Juliet. Romeo climbed the orchard wall, and he saw the rope ladder hanging from the balcony of Juliet's room; and when he reached the balcony, he found Juliet waiting for him.

There they sat down together, and spoke tender words of farewell. They spoke of their love that would never die; of their hope of brighter days; and of the joy that would be theirs in the happier days to come.

And the stars shone brightly for them; and the trees made soft music for them; and the breezes brought to them the perfume of the roses and the fragrance of the orange grove.

And the night passed all too quickly. Some grey streaks were seen in the

eastern skies, and the song of the lark was heard.

The dawn they dreaded was near at hand. The time had come for Romeo to go.

"Must you be going?" murmured Juliet. "It is not yet near day. It was the song of the nightingale, and not the lark, that broke in upon our ears. Nightly she sings on yon pomegranate tree. Believe me, love, it was the nightingale."

And Romeo said:

"It was the lark, the herald of the morn,
No nightingale: look, love, what envious
streaks
Do lace the severing clouds in yonder east.
Night's candles are burnt out, and jocund day
Stands tiptoe on the misty mountain tops:
I must be gone and live, or stay and die."

"What you see in the sky," said Juliet, "is only a meteor to light you on your way to Mantua. Therefore stay."

"I am content if you will have it so," said Romeo. "Let's talk. It is not day."

Clearer sounded the note of the lark, and Romeo and Juliet knew too well that the dawn was at hand.

"It is the lark," cried Juliet. "Be gone, away! It grows lighter."

"Farewell, farewell!" said Romeo.

And as he went down the ladder, Juliet called to him:

"Love, husband, let me hear from you every day."

"Farewell!" said Romeo. "I shall miss no chance of sending you a message."

And as Romeo's face disappeared among the roses, Juliet exclaimed:

"O Heaven, send him back soon!"

## A PROMISE TO COUNT PARIS

### AND AN ANGRY FATHER

THERE was another hard trial in store for Juliet that day.

On the previous evening, Count Paris had visited the mansion, to ask once more for the hand of Juliet in marriage. He was received by Lord and Lady Capulet.

"Things have fallen out unluckily," said Capulet to Paris. "I have had no chance to speak to my daughter. She is much grieved at the death of her cousin Tybalt. But I think she will be ruled by me, and I promise you her love. Wife, go tell her of Paris' love, and bid her, on Wednesday next,—— Let me see, what day is this?"

"Monday, my lord," said Paris.

"Monday," repeated Capulet. "Well, Wednesday is too soon. On Thursday let it be. Tell her that, on Thursday, she shall be married to this noble Count.

We'll make no great ado, for, out of respect to the memory of Tybalt, it is not fitting that we revel much. We'll have only a few friends to the wedding. What say you to Thursday, Paris?"

"My lord, I wish that Thursday were to-morrow," answered Paris.

Turning to his wife, Capulet said:

"Go to Juliet before you go to bed, and prepare her for her coming marriage."

Lady Capulet, however, waited till the next morning, and, not long after Romeo had departed, she entered Juliet's chamber where she found Juliet speaking to her nurse.

"I am not well," said Juliet, pale from sorrow and lack of sleep.

"Still weeping for your cousin's death?" said her mother. "Well, weep no more, for I have joyful tidings, girl. Your father has chosen a husband for you. Early next Thursday morning, at Saint Peter's Church, the gallant and noble gentleman, Count Paris, will make you a joyful bride."

Juliet would have acted wisely if she had, there and then, said that she could not marry Count Paris, because she was already the wife of Romeo. But she said:

"I wonder at this haste. I have scarcely spoken to Count Paris. I pray you, tell my father, I will not marry yet."

Lady Capulet was surprised and annoyed.

"Here comes your father," she said. "Tell him so yourself."

"How now, wife," said Capulet as he entered, "have you made our wishes known to her?"

"Yes," said Lady Capulet, "but she will not marry."

"Have I heard aright, wife?" said Capulet, anger rising within him. "She will not marry? Does she not give us thanks? Is she not proud of this marriage? Does she not count herself fortunate, that we have found so worthy a gentleman to be her bridegroom?"

"Not proud that you have done this," said Juliet; "yet, seeing that you did this

out of love for me, I am thankful. I could never be proud of a husband that I should hate."

There could be no mistake about her meaning. She refused to marry Paris.

Lord Capulet was furious that this child of his, this young girl, should set his will at naught.

"What is this?" he cried. "'Proud' and 'I thank you!' Thank me no thankings, nor proud me no prouds, but be ready to go on Thursday with Paris to Saint Peter's church, or I'll drag you there on a hurdle!"

"Good father," cried Juliet, "I beseech you on my knees, hear me with patience."

"Hang you, young baggage!" he stormed. "Go to the church on Thursday, or never after look me in the face."

Lady Capulet and the nurse tried to calm him, but their words were of no avail. He turned to them, and cried:

"It makes me mad! Day, night, hour, time, tide, work, play, alone, and in com-

pany, it has ever been my care that she should make a good match. And now, after having found a gentleman of noble parentage, owning wide lands, youthful and nobly trained, and as fine-looking as one could wish—after all this, to have a whining fool say, 'I'll not wed'."

Then he turned again to Juliet.

"My promise to Paris must be honoured," he said. "If you will not wed, you shall not live under this roof. Graze where you will. Hang, beg, starve, die in the streets! For, by my soul, I'll never want to see you again!"

And he strode fiercely out of the room.

"Is there no pity sitting in the clouds?" cried Juliet. "O, my sweet mother, cast me not away. Delay this marriage for a month, for a week!"

"Talk not to me," cried Lady Capulet, "for I have done with you."

And she followed her husband.

Whatever Juliet was to do, had to be done quickly, for it was only two days to

Thursday. She made up her mind to go and seek the advice of Friar Laurence. She said to her nurse:

"Go to my mother, and tell her, that, having displeased my father, I have gone to the cell of Friar Laurence, there to confess my sins and to ask for forgiveness."

# JULIET MEETS PARIS

## AND THE FRIAR UNFOLDS A PLAN

WHEN Juliet entered the cell of Friar Laurence, she found herself face to face with Count Paris, who had come there to speak to the friar about the wedding.

Though her heart was aching, Juliet put on a brave face. She made Paris a curtsy, and she gave him a smile.

"Happily met, my lady and my wife," was his greeting.

"You must wait before you call me wife until I *am* your wife," said Juliet.

"That must be, love, on Thursday next," said Paris.

"What must be, shall be," was Juliet's answer.

"Have you come to confess to this father?" asked Paris.

"To answer that, I should be confessing to you," replied Juliet, smiling.



"HAPPILY MET"

"Do not deny to him that you love me," said Paris.

"I will confess to you that I love the holy friar," answered Juliet.

"And you will confess, too, that you love me," said Paris, trying to draw a word of love from Juliet.

"If I do," she said with a gay laugh, "it will be worth more, being spoken behind your back than to your face."

Paris took Juliet's hand and raised it to his lips. He then departed.

"O, shut the door!" cried Juliet to the friar. "Come weep with me; past hope, past cure, past help."

"Ah, Juliet, I already know of your grief," said the friar. "I hear that you must be married to the Count on Thursday."

"Tell me how I may prevent this," she cried; and, taking a dagger hidden in her dress, she went on:

"If, in your wisdom, you can give no help, then this knife shall help me. If you

cannot speak of a remedy, then let me die."

"Speak not thus, daughter," said the friar. "I see a kind of remedy, but it is a desperate one, and it will need great courage on your part."

"O, bid me leap from yonder tower!" cried Juliet. "Bid me lurk among serpents, and I will do it without fear so long as I can keep true to my own sweet love."

The friar brought forth a small bottle, or, as it is called, a phial. It contained a drug which he had made from rare herbs.

"Do this then," he said. "Go home, be merry, and give consent to marry Paris. To-morrow, Wednesday night, go to your chamber alone, and there drink this liquor. It will send you into a sleep that is like death. This will last for two and forty hours, and you will then awake as from a pleasant dream. On the wedding morn, you will appear as dead. Then, as is the custom of this country, attired in your

best robes, you will be borne uncovered on a bier, and laid in the ancient vault of the Capulets. Meanwhile I shall send a letter to Romeo, and tell him what has been done. He will come secretly to Verona, and he and I will watch your waking. That very night, Romeo shall take you with him to Mantua. But you must be brave."

"Give it to me, give it to me!" cried Juliet, as she took the phial. "Love will give me strength!"

# THE WEDDING DAY ARRIVES

## But Joy is Turned to Sorrow

On the next day, Juliet delighted her father by saying:

"I have learnt from Friar Laurence how wrong I have been to disobey you. Pardon me, I pray you. Henceforward I shall do as you bid me."

Capulet sent out invitations to the wedding, and all the people of his household were busy, making ready for the wedding feast.

That night Juliet asked her nurse not to stay in her chamber with her, as she wished to be alone at her prayers.

She took the phial that Friar Laurence had given her, and a faint, cold fear came upon her.

"What if this mixture does not work at all?" she asked herself. "Shall I be married then to-morrow morning? What if it be poison that the friar has given me,

because he fears to make it known that he has married me to Romeo? What if I wake before Romeo comes? Shall I then be stifled in the vault and die before help reaches me?"

She brushed her fears aside.

"Romeo, I come," she cried. "This do I drink to you!"

. . . . .

On the wedding morn, when the nurse came to wake Juliet, she found her lying cold and still. Her breathing had ceased, and the pallor of death was upon her face.

"Help, help!" cried the nurse, "my lady's dead!"

Lord and Lady Capulet hurried to the chamber.

"O, me!" cried Lady Capulet, "My child, my only life! I had but one poor and loving child, and cruel death has snatched it from my sight!"

And as Capulet gazed upon Juliet, he said:

"Life has long since left these lips. Death lies on her like an untimely frost

upon the sweetest flower of all the field. Alack, my child is dead, and with my child, my joys are buried."

Friar Laurence was early upon the scene.

"Is the bride ready to go to church?" he asked.

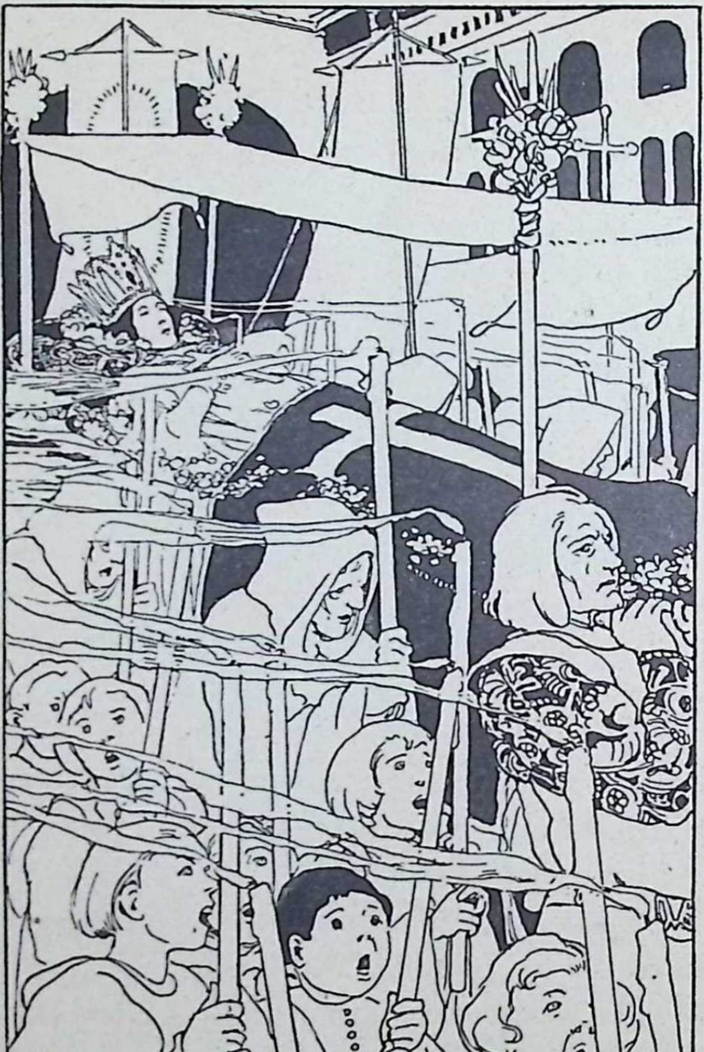
"Ready to go," said Capulet, "but never to return. She is dead."

Then Friar Laurence said:

"Heaven and yourself shared this child. Now Heaven has all. Your part in her, you could not keep from death. But Heaven keeps his part in life everlasting. Dry up your tears, and, as the custom is, bear her to church in all her best array, and let us all follow her to her grave."

And gladness was turned to sorrow: the wedding guests became the mourners: the marriage feast became the funeral meal: the bridal flowers became the wreaths, and the wedding gown the shroud.

And Juliet was borne uncovered upon a bier, and laid in the vault of the Capulets.



JULIET WAS BORNE UNCOVERED UPON A BIER

# IN THE PALACE OF DIM NIGHT

## Romeo Comes to Rest

Friar Laurence had written a letter to Romeo, and he had asked a holy brother, Friar John, to carry it with all speed to Mantua.

But the letter was never delivered. Friar John had been to visit some people who were stricken with a dread disease that had broken out in Verona, and he was not allowed to leave his house, lest he might help to spread the disease.

So Romeo had no message from Friar Laurence, but Romeo's servant, by name Balthasar, came riding post haste to Mantua with dire news.

"News from Verona," cried Romeo joyfully as he greeted Balthasar. "How is my lady? Is my father well? How fares it with Juliet? I ask again. For nothing can be ill if she is well."

"Then she is well and nothing can be ill," said Balthasar sadly. "Her body sleeps in the vault of the Capulets, and her soul is with the angels."

"This is the end!" cried Romeo. "Come what may, nothing can happen worse than this!"

"Get me ink and paper," he said to Balthasar, "and hire post-horses. I will go to the vault to-night."

Romeo had, there and then, made up his mind to do a terrible deed. It was to break into the vault, take one last look at Juliet and then kill himself at her side.

He bought some poison, and he wrote a letter to tell his father, Lord Montague, all that had happened, and what he was about to do.

Then he and Balthasar mounted their horses and rode hard for Verona, which they reached at night-fall, and they made their way to the vault.

But there was another sorrow-stricken

man there before them. Attended by his page, Count Paris had come to strew flowers at the door of the vault where the beloved Juliet lay, but he wanted no one to be a witness of his grief.

"Give me the flowers," he said to his page. "Put out the torch. I do not wish to be seen. Give me warning by whistling, if you hear anyone approach."

Soon he heard the warning whistle, and he hid himself, and watched.

Romeo came towards the tomb with Balthasar who was carrying a torch, and also tools with which to break open the door of the vault.

"Give me the mattock and the wrenching iron," said Romeo. "Take this letter, and, early in the morning, deliver it to my father. Give me the torch. I am going down into the tomb, partly to behold my lady's face, but chiefly to take a precious ring from her finger, which I desire to keep. On pain of death, leave

this place. Pry not into my doings, or I'll tear you limb from limb."

Balthasar, however, did not leave the graveyard, but stood some distance away where Romeo could not see him.

Romeo wrenched open the door of the vault.

"This is the banished Montague," muttered Paris, "that murdered Tybalt and caused Juliet to die of grief. He has come to do some villainous shame at the tomb of the Capulets."

He stepped forward and cried:

"Stop your unholy toil, vile Montague! I arrest you, condemned villain. You must die!"

"I must, indeed, and therefore came I here," said Romeo. "Good gentle youth, do not tempt a desperate man. Put not another sin upon my head. Live, and say hereafter, that a madman's mercy bade you run away. O, be gone!"

"I defy you!" said Paris.

They drew their swords and fought, and

the horrified page ran off to call the night watchmen of the city.

It was soon over. Count Paris fell.

"If you are merciful," said Paris, as he died, "open the tomb and place me beside Juliet."

"In faith I will," said Romeo; and, as he looked at the face of the youth he had slain, he exclaimed:

"Mercutio's kinsman! It is he that was to have married Juliet! O, give me your hand, brother in misfortune!"

And he tenderly lifted him and carried him into the vault.

When he looked around, Romeo's eyes fell upon the body of Tybalt. He knelt before it, and said:

"O Tybalt, forgive me, cousin! What greater favour can I do for you, than to take the life of him that slew you?"

Then Romeo gazed upon the face of Juliet.

"O my love! my wife!" he cried. "Fear not that I will leave you. Never from

this palace of dim night will I depart again. O, here will I set up my everlasting rest. I drink to my love!"

And he drank the poison.

Then he kissed Juliet, and he fell dead at her side.

# ALAS, TOO LATE!

## Montague and Capulet Clasp Hands

At that moment, Friar Laurence was hurrying with all speed to the tomb. He had only just heard of the mischance which had prevented the delivery of the letter to Romeo.

"Unhappy fortune!" said Friar Laurence. "Juliet will soon wake. I must go to the tomb alone. I will write again to Romeo, and keep Juliet in my cell till he arrives."

In the graveyard he met Balthasar.

"Tell me, good friend," said the Friar, "what is yon torch that burns in Capulet's vault?"

"My master, Romeo, has been there full half an hour," was the answer.

"Go with me to the vault," said the friar.

"I dare not," said Balthasar. "My master threatened to kill me if I stayed here."

The friar entered the vault alone, and to his horror, he saw Romeo and Paris lying dead.

"O, unkind hour!" cried the friar in deep distress.

Just then Juliet awoke.

"O friar, it is a comfort to see you here," she said. "Where is my lord? Where is my Romeo?"

Footsteps and voices were then heard, for the watchmen were hurrying to the vault. A great fear seized the friar.

He now saw that he had done wrong. He ought, long since, to have advised Juliet to make her marriage known, or to have spoken the truth himself. But he had failed in this duty, and he had put his knowledge of drugs to a wrong use. Yet, all he did, he had thought, was for the best.

Now he saw the fruits of his mistake. His plan had led to nothing but black despair and death.

"Come away from that nest of death," he said to Juliet. "A power, greater than ours, has thwarted us. Your husband there lies dead, and Paris too. Stay not to ask questions, for I can hear the watch-men coming. Come, good Juliet, and I will send you to live among a sisterhood of holy nuns."

"I will not leave this place," said Juliet. "Get you hence."

There was a strange calm in her voice.

And the broken-hearted friar, hardly knowing what he did, fled from the vault.

Juliet turned to the body of Romeo.

"What's here?" she cried, "a cup in his hand? Poison! Have you drunk all and left no friendly drop to help me afterwards?"

She snatched Romeo's dagger from its sheath. She kissed her husband. Then she stabbed herself, and fell dead at his side.

The page of Paris and the watchmen entered the tomb, and there they saw the bodies of Romeo and Juliet and Paris.

"Go tell the Prince," cried one of the watchmen to the page. "Run to the Capulets! Arouse the Montagues!"

Other watchmen entered, some bringing in Balthasar whom they had seized near the tomb, and others bringing the friar whom they had found trembling and weeping in the graveyard.

The Prince soon arrived. Then came Lord and Lady Capulet with others of their household, and they were followed by Lord Montague and some of his kinsmen.

The Prince questioned the friar, and in a voice broken by grief Friar Laurence told of all that he had done. Then Balthasar related all he knew, and he handed to the Prince, Romeo's letter to his father. The page of Paris, also told of what he had seen; and, in this way, the whole pitiful story was pieced together.

Montague and Capulet stood with bowed heads, and with tears streaming from their eyes. They now saw how foolish and evil had been their quarrel.

All enmity and hatred and bitterness had passed away. There was no room in their hearts for anything but sorrow, as they gazed at their beloved children lying cold and still. And these two children, these two faithful hearts, had, by their very marriage, made Montague and Capulet, each a kinsman of the other.

"O, brother Montague," cried Capulet, "give me your hand!"

And Montague and Capulet clasped hands in friendship.

Too late, alas, too late!

And Lord Montague said:

"I will set up a statue in pure gold of the true and faithful Juliet."

And Lord Capulet said:

"And a statue in gold of Romeo, will I set up beside it."

. . . . .

In the fair city of Verona, in a beautiful garden into which all people were free to enter, there were set up the two statues of shining gold. And around them were fountains and flower-beds and rose-covered bowers. And there the birds sang all the long day through. Sometimes their note was sad and plaintive, but at mating-time, they filled the air with a gladsome chorus, as they sang their spring-tide song of love and of hope and of joy. It seemed as though the souls of Romeo and Juliet had found life again in the hearts of the birds, and that their deathless love had found voice again in everlasting song.